

# INTRODUCTION

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## Why Electronic Case Files?

Judges and court staff now have electronic access to docket information, case management data and legal research materials; however, most documents in a case file remain available only in paper form. If it is reasonable to assume that with computer word processing, most documents generated are created first in electronic form, the federal courts can further reduce the reliance on paper records by establishing electronic case file systems. These systems should enhance the accuracy, management and security of records, reduce delays in the flow of information and achieve cost savings for the judiciary, the bar and litigants.

### Potential benefits of the system include:

- improved judge, court staff, and public access to case file information
- cost savings and efficiencies through increased productivity
- reduced physical handling, maintenance, and copying of file documents
- improved docketing, scheduling, case management and statistical reporting
- enhanced accuracy and efficiency in record maintenance
- multiple parties can view the same case files simultaneously
- filing and access to court records are available virtually around the clock

This manual provides instructions on how to use the Electronic Case Filing System (ECF) to file documents with the court, or to view and retrieve docket sheets and documents for all cases assigned to this system. It assumes a working knowledge of Netscape and Adobe Acrobat. For questions regarding Netscape or Adobe Acrobat, please refer to their instruction manuals.

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## Help Desk

If you are in need of technical assistance, please telephone the **ECF Help Desk** at the following numbers: **(718) 330 -2188 ext**                      **or**                      **(631) 712-6200 ext**

***[NOTE: The Help Desk is located in the “Brooklyn Office and the Central Islip Office”. When leaving a message on the ECF Help Desk line, include your area code. This will aid in the timely return of your call. ]***

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## Capabilities of the System

- Electronically file pleadings and documents to "live" cases.
- View official docket sheets and documents associated with cases.
- View various reports (*e.g.* Cases Filed Report, Judge's Calendar) for electronically filed cases.
- Make electronic documents easily printable for users who require a paper copy.
- Train users on a training system comparable to the "live" (official) system.
- Download the most recent version of the User's Manual.
- Download Netscape Browser and Portable Document Format ("PDF") configuration information.
- Submit comments and questions regarding the system